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Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Letter dated 14 December 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Poland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as representative of the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of the Declaration adopted at the Seventh Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council held in Oslo on 2 and 3 December 1998.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its enclosure circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 36.

(*Signed*) Eugeniusz **Wyzner**
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Annex

Oslo Ministerial Declaration

I.

We have discussed the challenges to security in our region, the OSCE's contribution to meeting them and how this can be developed in future. We stress the need for the international community to develop co ordinated responses to such challenges. 1998 has been an important year in this regard, including for the OSCE.

The crisis in Kosovo has come to the forefront of the OSCE's concerns and action. We urge the parties to stop all violence and to co operate in the negotiation of a political settlement.

The Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) is the largest and most difficult operation ever put into the field by the OSCE. It marks the international community's recognition of the Organization's developing potential and expertise to contribute to security. Success for the KVM requires not only the use of internal mechanisms for transparent consultations, but also effective co operation with other inter-governmental bodies, as well as with non governmental organizations; and it requires adequate allocation of resources by participating States.

This year the OSCE successfully supervised the general elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It will continue to further the gradual processes of transferring responsibility for democracy building to the authorities in this country.

The OSCE role in police monitoring in the Danubian region of Croatia marks a new and practical development of the OSCE's operational capabilities.

The OSCE will continue and strengthen its efforts directed at the resolution of conflicts in Georgia and Moldova, as well as the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It is necessary that the OSCE responds with equal energy and determination to all of its tasks.

We welcome the Memoranda of Understanding signed between the OSCE/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the governments of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan aimed at deepening the co operation in the fields of democracy and human rights. We take note of the proposal of the Chairman-in-Office to open OSCE offices in the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

We note with satisfaction the growing involvement of the OSCE in Central Asia and welcome the establishment of the OSCE Centres in Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan as a further expression of our commitment to promote stability and co operation throughout the entire OSCE area. We also welcome the signature by the Chairman-in-Office of Memoranda of Understanding on co operation between the OSCE/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the governments of Kazakstan and Kyrgyzstan.

We recognize that the expansion of OSCE operations requires further strengthening of operational capabilities of the OSCE, including its Secretariat, and appreciate that the Secretary General has taken initial steps towards this goal. We support an early finalization of an OSCE strategy for training, the object of which is to enhance the ability of the Organization to carry out its tasks.

II.

We have taken stock of the progress this year in the work on a Document-Charter on European Security. This has been achieved through focused, target-oriented negotiation. Emphasis has been on the practical development of OSCE instruments for action, including co operation with other organizations and institutions. At both conceptual and practical level, there has been progress in the development of the OSCE Platform for Co operative Security as an instrument enhancing European solidarity and partnership and one of the essential elements of a Document-Charter. Developments on the ground have enriched the discussion of the role of the OSCE in conflict settlement.

We urge rapid progress in the development of a Document-Charter.

III.

We conclude once again that the potential of the OSCE to contribute to security stems from its broad membership, its shared values, and its decision making based on transparency and consensus. We underline that respect for OSCE principles and implementation of OSCE commitments remain fundamental to security. Promoting compliance and reinforcing thereby democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including rights of persons belonging to national minorities, the development of free market economies and social progress, and alleviating the plight of refugees and displaced persons, require constant effort. Primary responsibility for achieving these goals lies with individual States, but much depends upon solidarity in the OSCE and a genuine partnership based on sovereign equality.

We stress the importance of sub-regional and bilateral co operation to complement OSCE-wide activities in the promotion of solidarity and partnership.

This spirit of solidarity and partnership is essential to OSCE's capacity to respond to risks and challenges to security. This extends not only to partnership between States, but to co operation among the different organizations and institutions to which those States belong. In this pragmatic, flexible and non-hierarchical co operation the OSCE should continue to develop its own operational activities in areas in which it has proved its strength.

We recognize that the OSCE police operations are now an integral part of the Organization's efforts in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. International police operations can provide an important contribution to building a society based on the rule of law that can consolidate democracy and enhance respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The participating States will enhance the capacity of the OSCE with regard to police operations. To this end, close co operation with the international organizations having

relevant experience in conducting police operations, and in the first instance the United Nations, will be established.

IV.

We reaffirm our commitment to arms control as an important element of our common security.

We reaffirm the importance of the CFE Treaty as a cornerstone of European security. Full implementation of the Treaty and its adaptation to the changing security environment in Europe will be an essential contribution to our common and indivisible security. In this context, we take note of the report by the Chairman of the Joint Consultative Group. We welcome the commitment made by the States Parties to complete the adaptation process by the time of the OSCE Summit in 1999. This goal will require that outstanding key issues be resolved and drafting begun in the first months of next year. We welcome the mutual commitment by the States Parties to redouble their efforts to achieve this goal.

We take positive note of the report on the activities of the Forum for Security Co operation (FSC). We declare the objective to complete the work on the review of the Vienna Document 1994 by the OSCE Summit in 1999. We welcome the increased attention given by the FSC to the regional dimension of security and confidence building measures, in accordance with the decisions of the Lisbon Summit and the Copenhagen Ministerial meeting.

We reaffirm the significance of the Open Skies Treaty and the necessity of its entry into force without delay.

We note with satisfaction that agreement was achieved on the mandate for negotiations on regional stability, as foreseen under Article V of Annex 1B of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

V.

We reaffirm that strengthened security and co operation in adjacent areas, in particular the Mediterranean, is important for stability in the OSCE region.

We welcome Jordan as a new Mediterranean Partner for Co operation. We value the long-standing relationship with the Mediterranean Partners and their interest in the work of the OSCE. As mutual dialogue develops, improvements in mechanisms of co operation to reinforce the principles and values of the OSCE could be considered. We support the work of the Mediterranean Contact Group in Vienna and encourage the Mediterranean Partners to continue to contribute to OSCE activities including through sending visitors to OSCE missions and guest observers to OSCE election monitoring operations.

The OSCE welcomes support for its activities from its Partners for Co operation. We appreciate the contributions of Japan and the Republic of Korea to OSCE efforts. We thank Japan for its generous financial support for Bosnia and Herzegovina elections and in the context of Kosovo.